

SPO



Maine State Planning Office

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May 5, 2008

Henry P. Clauson, First Selectman
Paula W. Clark, Chair Comprehensive Planning Committee
8 Old Kents Hill Road
Readfield, Maine 04355

RE: Town of Readfield Comprehensive Plan 2008 Update Findings

Dear Mr. Clauson and Ms. Clark:

The State Planning Office (SPO) has completed its review of the Readfield Comprehensive Plan, dated 2008. The community has clearly worked very hard to produce the Plan, and we recognize that the development of a comprehensive plan is a difficult task, requiring a significant commitment on the part of the members of the Comprehensive Planning Committee and other Town residents and employees.

In reviewing the submitted Plan pursuant to the goals of the State's Planning and Land Use Regulation Act (the Act) and the Comprehensive Plan review Criteria Rule, SPO has identified a single inconsistency and finds the 2008 Plan to be *inconsistent* with the Act. The inconsistency is detailed below. Proposed amendments to the Plan to address this single inconsistency may be submitted for review within twenty-four (24) months of the date of this letter.

The findings consist of four sections:

The first provides SPO's general Conclusions about the Plan, indicating overall strengths and weaknesses.

The second section identifies the Inconsistency and SPO's Recommendation for addressing it. Inconsistencies indicate those parts of the Plan that do not adequately address the goals in the Act. Recommendations provide one way, though certainly not the only way, the Town could modify the Update to address the inconsistency.

The third section provides Suggestions for how the Town might modify the Plan or issues it might explore to improve or strengthen the Update to better meet State and local goals. It is not necessary for the Town to respond to suggestions in order to be found consistent with the Act.

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Suggestions are simply offered as advice on how the Town could improve its Plan.

The fourth section identifies Other Agency Comments that have been received from State agencies, regional councils, and other interested parties. This section identifies significant conflicts among the comments received and explains the Office's position regarding points of conflict.

SECTION I. CONCLUSIONS

The Readfield Comprehensive Plan is very good plan incorporating a well conceived and extensive inventory and analysis of natural and community assets and services. The plan identifies current and anticipated challenges and presents a framework of policies and strategies intended to address them.

The plan presents a strong emphasis on preserving natural resource and open space values. It also does a commendable job in highlighting the local economy and the town's historic and cultural resources. The additional plan elements: Readfield Corner Revitalization Study, the Readfield Open Space Plan, and the Maranacook Lake Watershed Management Plan illustrate a strong commitment to community planning by the leadership and residents of Readfield.

Section One of the Plan does an excellent job presenting the allocation of responsibilities and timetable among the Town's various Boards and Staff. This will assist in managing the Plan's implementation.

SECTION II. INCONSISTENCIES

Inconsistency 1

The Plan's narrative description of proposed districts does not correspond with the Proposed Future Land Uses map or the Proposed Land Use Districts map.

(Me State Planning Office, 07 105 CMR 202-Section 6)

The Future Land Use Plan presented on pages 13 – 23 identifies the following land use districts
Growth Areas: Village District, Village Residential District, and Academic District;

Rural Areas: Rural Residential, Rural Mixed Use District, Rural Resource District. A map attached to the hard copy of the Plan is labeled Proposed Future Land Uses. The Map Legend identifies a Residential Growth Area (presumably the Village Residential District), Village and Village Residential; A blue colored area that is labeled: Rural, Rural Residential, and Rural Resource. The Map also identifies Shoreland Districts as Green including Resource Protection, Shoreland Residential, and Stream Protection. The Academic District is also identified. The map does not identify a Rural Mixed Use District described in the Plan text.

The electronic submittal of the Plan includes the Proposed Future Land Uses Map and also presents a map titled Proposed Land Use Districts. The Proposed Land Use Districts Map does a better job distinguishing the various districts depicting a Rural Residential, Rural Resource, and

a Rural District. However, this map's legend also does not identify the Rural Mixed Use District described in the Plan text.

Recommendation 1

The Plan should be revised to consistently represent Future Land Use Plan text and Map(s).

SECTION III. SUGGESTIONS

Land Use

The Plan (p.10) describes the Rural Mixed Use District intended uses identifying small-scale commercial and industrial uses (C.11) and larger commercial and industrial development (C.12) but does not define these distinctions. It would be helpful to those charged with crafting ordinance language to understand what is intended to define these distinctions.

In Other Revisions to Land Use Ordinances (p.21, #14) the second sentence appears to contradict the intent of the first sentence. Consider eliminating the second sentence.

In the same section (#18), the Plan should be definitive between requirements and options.

Fiscal Capacity

The Plan (p. 68 Summary) suggests Central Maine Power Company properties are tax-exempt. If this is true, an additional sentence or phrase should explain why CMP properties are tax-exempt.

SECTION IV. OTHER AGENCY COMMENTS

The Maine Natural Areas Program/Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the Maine Forest Service provided comments on the Readfield Plan.

This Office concurs with the suggestions for Plan improvement in the Agency comments and recommends these be incorporated in future revisions to the Plan.

I want to thank the Planning Committee and the citizens of Readfield for their valuable work on the Plan Update and their commitment to implementing the Plan.

I am available to meet with the Committee to discuss how to address the inconsistency identified above.

Sincerely,



Frank Hample

Planner

Cc: Chris Huck, KVCOG

Enclosures/attachments